


POLICY

Approved by: Rebecca R. Hunter, Commissioner	Policy Number: 12-064 (rev. 10/13)
Signature: 	Supersedes: 12-064, 11-014, 95-028, 91-022, 91-021, 88-022, 87-033, 87-032, 87-026, 87-025, 86-022, 85-036, 85-034, 84-030
Application: Executive Branch Agencies and Employees, Human Resource Officers	Effective Date: October 1, 2013
Authority: T.C.A. § 4-3-1703, T.C.A. § 8-30-104, T.C.A. § 8-30-313	Rule: Chapter 1120-05

Subject:

Performance Management Procedures and Processing

The Performance Management Program is a systematic process used to define the standards of performance and expected work outcomes for all employees, provide ongoing performance feedback, offer the employee developmental opportunities, and document an objective and fact-based record of the employee's performance. The purpose of the performance management program is to facilitate the creation and nurturing of a performance based culture where the individual employee's performance is aligned with the agency and administration's objectives and employees are appropriately rewarded for the results they achieve.

Each covered employee shall have an individual performance plan which details the defined performance standards and expected work outcomes. The individual performance plan shall be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant to the strategic objective of the employee's agency, and time sensitive (SMART).

Performance Management Procedural Steps

The following procedural steps list the *minimum* requirements of the performance management program for each employee, each cycle:

- (1) **Individual Performance Plan.** An initial discussion between the rater and the employee which details the performance management process and establishes expected performance standards and work outcomes. The rater must create a new individual performance plan (performance plan) and document the discussion of this plan with the employee at the beginning of each performance management cycle.
- (2) **Interim Reviews.** A minimum of two (2) periodic discussions reviewing the employee's performance of stated expectations and work outcomes (providing constructive performance feedback/coaching) discussing ways in which the employee can enhance performance and, if appropriate, the consequences of "unacceptable" or "marginal" performance. These periodic

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reviews must be recorded in Edison or documented in writing if the employee does not have access to Edison.

- (3) Annual Review. A documented annual review of the employee's performance which provides the employee with an opportunity to comment on the review. The annual review will provide the employee with a rating of performance for each work outcome and for overall performance. Each rating must be justified by objective, fact-based statements of observation by the supervisor.

The following rating scale will be used to describe overall performance:

Unacceptable Performance.....Unsatisfactory work outcomes.

Marginal Performance.....Work outcomes consistently do not meet some stated expectations.

Valued Performance.....Work outcomes consistently meet stated expected performance.

Advanced Performance.....Work outcomes consistently meet and often exceed stated expected performance.

Outstanding Performance.....Work outcomes consistently exceed expected performance and affect measurable improvements in organizational performance.

An overall rating higher than “marginal” may not be assigned if the employee receives a rating of “unacceptable” in one (1) or more stated work outcomes.

Discussions regarding any procedural step may not occur within thirty (30) days of a discussion of another procedural step within the same review cycle in order to allow the employee time to perform to expectations and/or feedback.

Performance Management Roles

Rater Role: The rater is the person measuring an employee's performance of the stated performance standards and work outcomes. Typically, the rater is the employee's direct supervisor or manager. The rater creates the employee's individual performance plan, provides feedback and conducts an annual review discussion with each employee, each review cycle.

Reviewer Role: The reviewer is the person responsible for ensuring that the performance management process is properly conducted. The reviewer's input and approval is required at each of the procedural steps prior to a discussion with the employee.

Reviewers shall review each of the procedural steps to determine that:

- (1) individual performance plans are written at the “valued” level of performance by stating performance standards and expected work outcomes that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant to the strategic objective of the employee's agency and time sensitive;

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- (2) the review process has been completed as required, including the initial performance planning discussion, a minimum of two interim reviews, and a documented annual review of the employee's performance;
- (3) performance feedback is provided to employees during the interim reviews; and
- (4) annual reviews are approved, signifying that the review is complete with assigned ratings and justifications objectively describing performance.

The reviewer serves as the final approver for annual reviews with ratings of “advanced”, “valued”, and “marginal”.

Appointing Authority Role: The appointing authority or designee acting in this role must approve all annual reviews with ratings of “outstanding” or “unacceptable” prior to the discussion with the employee.

Periods of Review (Review Cycles)

The standard annual performance review cycle begins on each October 1st and ends September 30th of the following year. Raters will use this review cycle for all full-time employees, with the exception of those serving a probationary or flex period.

While the steps included in the review cycle are designed to be completed throughout a twelve (12) month period, it may be necessary to have a reduced review cycle because of probation periods ending within the standard review cycle, periods of extended leave, or alterations to the employee's performance plan. In these instances, the minimum timeframe for completion of all steps shall be ninety (90) days from the date of the performance plan with no less than thirty (30) days between each step in the review cycle. This minimum timeframe is designed to allow the employee an opportunity to understand and perform to the stated expectations, receive two (2) interim reviews based on the rater's observation, and improve performance, if necessary, prior to an annual review.

Employees who complete a probationary or flex performance review period shall transition to the standard annual performance review cycle once the probationary or flex period is complete, even if the transition occurs in the middle of the standard annual performance review cycle. For those employees who complete the probationary or flex period and transition to the standard annual performance review cycle, a valid performance review cycle shall contain all of the procedural steps within a timeframe of no less than ninety (90) days from the date of the performance planning discussion.

Any employee who successfully completes a probationary or flex performance review period between October 1st and June 30th of any year will begin a shortened review cycle that covers the time period from the end of the probationary or flex due date through the next regular review cycle end date of September 30th of that year. This will allow the employee to transition to the standard twelve (12) month review cycle beginning October 1st. Any employee who successfully completes a probationary or flex performance review period between July 1st and September 30th of any year will have less than

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ninety (90) days remaining before the start of the next regular review cycle beginning October 1st. Therefore, this employee will immediately begin a new review cycle the first day of the following month that will extend beyond the normal twelve (12) month review cycle. This will allow the review cycle to extend beyond the minimum of ninety (90) days and transition the employee to a standard twelve (12) month review cycle beginning on October 1st of the following year.

Example 1

An employee's probation ends on June 15th. The rater has more than the required 90 days to complete the required procedural steps and provide an annual review by September 30th. The rater may begin a shortened review cycle on the first day of the following month, July 1st and complete the required procedural steps by September 30th. The employee is ready to transition to the standard annual performance review cycle on October 1st.

Example 2

An employee's probation ends on July 15th resulting in less than the required 90 days to complete the required procedural steps by September 30th. The rater may begin an extended review cycle on August 1st and will complete all the required procedural steps by September 30th of the following year. This brings the employee back to the standard review cycle from October 1st through September 30th.

Example 3

An employee's probation ends on July 15th resulting in less than the required 90 days to complete the required procedural steps by September 30th. The rater postpones beginning a new review cycle until the start of the next standard review cycle allowing the employee to transition to the standard 12 month review cycle on October 1st.

Forms/Documents

All forms including the Annual Review Form, Probationary Report Form, and the Flex Staffing Review Form are located in Edison in the rater's current or historical documents folder. For situations where an employee does not have access to Edison, a paper-based version of these forms is available on the Department of Human Resources' web site at <http://www.tn.gov/dohr/ogc-er/performance/perform.shtml>.

The paper-based version of these forms may be printed and completed manually or on-line by saving the form to the rater's computer. After all signatures are secured, the rater will route the paper version of the annual review to the agency performance management coordinator for entry into Edison. When using a paper-based version of any form, the rater must ensure that the reviewer approves the document prior to a discussion with the employee.

Records

The annual performance review and any of the documented procedural steps, shall not be considered public record under Tenn. Code Ann. § 10-7-503 and not open for public inspection.

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Request for Administrative Review

An employee may request an administrative review of a completed annual review when the employee believes that one of the procedural steps has been violated. An employee may file a written request for review along with any appropriate documentation to the agency appointing authority within fourteen (14) calendar days after the date of the annual review. The appointing authority shall respond in writing to the employee within fifteen (15) calendar days. If the employee is not satisfied with the decision of the appointing authority, the employee may file a written request for administrative review along with any relevant documentation to the Commissioner of the Department of Human Resources within fourteen (14) calendar days of the appointing authority's decision. The Commissioner will review all written material and shall respond to the employee in writing within fifteen (15) calendar days. The decision of the Commissioner is final and not subject to further review.

Questions regarding this policy may be directed to the Employee Relations Division.